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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ATTORNEY GENERAL DARRELL MCGRAW ANNOUNCES SETTLEMENT WITH PINNACLE CREDIT SERVICES, A MINNESOTA DEBT PURCHASER

Attorney General Darrell McGraw announced a settlement with Pinnacle Credit Services, a Minnesota limited liability company that purchases consumers' debts from creditors and then attempts to collect these debts from the consumers.

Attorney General McGraw's Consumer Protection Division began investigating Pinnacle after receiving a complaint from a consumer who stated that she did not owe the debt Pinnacle was attempting to collect. The consumer had previously disputed this debt with another debt collector and provided proof that the debt was not hers. During the investigation, the Division discovered that Pinnacle was not licensed to collect debts in West Virginia.

Under the settlement agreement, Pinnacle agreed to cease collections in West Virginia until it is properly licensed. Pinnacle also agreed that all West Virginia accounts that it owns will be deleted from its records and that it will notify the three major credit reporting agencies to delete all references to these accounts from the consumers' credit reports. Pinnacle estimates that the cancelled debt will total over \$1 million.

Consumers may receive collection notices for debts in amounts they believe to be inaccurate or for creditors they do not recognize. Attorney General McGraw advises these consumers that they should dispute the debt in writing and request documents that verify the debt. Old debts are regularly shuffled from the original creditor to multiple collection agencies or sold to debt purchasers. Information regarding these debts is transmitted electronically and may be inaccurate. Moreover, the collection agency or debt purchaser may have added unlawful additional fees to the original debt.

Consumers who are interested in more information on how to dispute a debt may visit the Attorney General's website at www.wvagov.com or contact his Consumer Protection Division at 304-558-8986 or 1-800-368-8808.

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